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September 22, 2015

Dear Ocean Protection Council Chairman Laird and Council Members:

The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation appreciates the opportunity to comment on a few of the agenda items associated with your September 22nd meeting, and are grateful for the leadership you are providing in these areas.

4. ACTION: Consideration of adoption of Proposition 1 grant guidelines

Proposition 1 funding offers an excellent opportunity to augment and complement existing efforts to protect our coastal watersheds and marine protected areas. Ocean Protection Council's key issue areas for Prop 1 funding are critically important, and the process for creating the Grant Guidelines was thorough. The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary have a long history of successful water quality protection projects that directly address the *Coastal and Ocean Water Quality Impacts* and *Marine Debris* areas of your plan. Our partnerships with the agriculture community, cities and municipalities, and other nonprofit organizations position us well to build upon prior work. We look forward to sharing more through your Grant Application process.

5. ACTION: Consideration of adoption of a resolution regarding the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Statewide Leadership Team and work plan

The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation has been working the past 8 years on marine protected areas education and outreach, with extensive input from communications and outreach professionals, and in close consultation with state agencies. Many of the actions identified in the leadership work plan should be approached as refinements on the previous initiatives, and built upon, rather than reinventing similar products. Resources already exist and we are ready to offer the many services, products and lessons learned over the course of marine protected areas implementation in all four regions of the state.

Attached are several examples of the outcomes that have been attained as efforts have shifted from interpretive centers and non-governmental partners to ocean recreation businesses and harbors and marinas in recent years. Using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife approved templates with standardized formatting and messaging, there exist:

- Thirteen interpretive brochures for marine protected areas along the north central and central coast (see Point Arena to Saunders Reef);
- Fifteen harbor brochures (on waterproof, tear proof paper) from Crescent City to San Diego and these are regularly distributed by partner businesses and local citizen groups;
- A repository of marine protected areas outreach materials is available on the www.CaliforniaMPAs.org website, where training materials, presentations, teaching curriculum and a library of videos and films are available for download.

Most recently, efforts have focused on leveraging the relationships with the 49 harbors, marinas and boat launches across the state. This has been both encouraging and gratifying as bait and tackle shops are now displaying marine protected area exhibits and posters; distributing brochures; signs are being duplicated and displayed in multiple locations on waterfront areas; marine protected area web pages have been created for pilot harbors along the coast including Crescent City, Santa Cruz, Morro Bay and Newport Harbors; articles have been published in statewide Department of Boating and Waterways publications, local fishing “rags” and are being shared on harbor web pages with links to regulatory information.

The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation looks forward to being engaged to build upon this exciting work to offer our many outcome-oriented services including partner engagement, project management, graphic design, etc. We stand ready and willing to work on tasks identified in the work plan, many of which we are already engaged in, and hope for the opportunity to have more conversations about those soon.

6. INFORMATIONAL: update on Marine Protected Area (MPA) signage project

One of the most rewarding and significant outcomes has been the active engagement of new partners. City managers, lifeguards, enforcement wardens, state and county parks, harbor masters and marina operators, non-governmental organizations such as Natural Resources Defense Council, Wildcoast, Heal the Bay, tribal communities, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife all contributed to the success of more than doubling the number of interpretive and regulatory signs for marine protected areas. Today more than 400 marine protected area signs are installed in prominent locations across the state, yet requests and demand for additional interpretive and harbor signage exists. We recommend the state focus on key harbors, marinas, boat launches and waterfront areas along the coast to fill the gap and help educate the ocean recreation users of California with needed signage. Feedback from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife field personnel and public polling indicate that the signage we’ve been producing with Ocean Protection Council and California Department of Fish and Wildlife involvement aids in compliance and, when needed, enforcement. A conservative estimate of 150 additional signs is needed at priority locations based on our surveys and established relationships and outreach across the state.

We are hopeful that the next phase of OPC/CDFW MPA signage funding will be able to build upon the momentum generated in the most recent grant (OPC #C1001000.)

Sincerely,

Dr. Rikki Dunsmore

California Marine Protected Areas Program Director

Attachments: A. Brochure Examples

B. Website Repository

C. Harbor Outreach Efforts

Website Repository (www.CaliforniaMPAs.org)

The www.CaliforniaMPAs.org website serves as a crucial resource where education and outreach materials from ourselves and partners throughout the state are compiled, many of which are easily downloadable and adaptable to other locations. Examples of available resources include marine protected areas success stories, videos and films, docent interpretive handbooks, signs, brochures, fact sheets, individual webpages for every MPA, research articles, posters, exhibits, and much more.

Basic Scientific Function of a Marine Protected Area

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are a valuable marine conservation tool used around the world. Like national parks and other protected areas on land, MPAs safeguard critical ocean habitat, allowing sensitive marine communities to recover and thrive.

The concept behind MPAs is quite simple: place some special parts of the ocean off limits to destructive activities, and give those special places a chance to recover and rebound.



Benefits of MPAs

Ecosystem Maintenance and Recovery

The top image shows an urchin barren. With the loss of apex predators, like the spiny lobster or southern sea otter, urchin populations take over and consume most of the kelp within an ecosystem.



After years of protection (see bottom image) lobster populations are able to rebound and keep urchin populations at bay, allowing kelp forests to thrive- the result of an MPA!

Preserving Biological Diversity

Protecting natural diversity and the abundance of marine life is vital to maintaining the function, structure and integrity of ocean ecosystems.



Visit Your Local MPAs

Each MPA in California is special and each provides a unique experience for its visitors. Whether it is Eureka Pt. that attracts bird watchers from far and wide, Point Lobos known for its unmatched SCUBA diving opportunities, or Año Nuevo that welcomes thousands of visitors during the peak oceanic seal season, these MPAs all deserve a visit!

North Coast MPAs



Presentation & Training Support Materials

The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation has held several trainings for docents, educators and public audiences to increase understanding and awareness of benefits of the California network of marine protected areas. These workshop materials are now available for your review and download. We have provided the presentations as a PDF document. We have included the audio or video file when possible. Our intent is to provide these materials so that they can easily refresh memories of the content discussed and to aid in the creation of training sessions within your own institution or organization.



MPA Messaging: What Works

Resource Media—a nonprofit communications firm that works at the intersection of public, economic and environmental health—has been working to raise awareness about marine protected areas for over a decade. This document contains five key messages that can be referenced when communicating about MPAs to various audiences. Each of these values also includes suggested talking points. These can form the foundation of communication about MPAs in multiple settings; from supporting MPAs at a Fish and Game Commission hearing to meetings with local legislators or talking with people you meet at the shore.

Marine Protected Areas in the Channel Islands: The First Five Years

COSEE West, a PowerPoint presentation developed by PISCO (Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans), University of California - Santa Barbara, University of California - Santa Cruz, and the Channel Islands National Park. It includes general information about MPAs with a focus on what researchers are finding at the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

On Demand California Marine Protected Areas Video Series

Looking for an engaging and dynamic webinar series to share with your staff and volunteers about California's new network of underwater parks? This three part series of 30 minute webinars, led by leading experts (e.g., Fred Heithaus, Mark Carr, Mike Sutton), provides a fresh and uplifting summary of how California led the nation in ocean conservation, the science of MPAs and how to talk about MPAs. Click here to start viewing!

Partners

The California MPAs Educational Resources website is showcasing a variety of MPA related products from our partner organizations and providing these resources for other agencies to use. Each organization has unique skills, providing complementary assets and capabilities to advance specific projects and/or initiatives.

While many of the products found within this website are specific to the needs, audience, and goals of a particular partner, the messaging, layout, or content may be suitable and adaptable for other outreach needs.

Please visit the websites of our federal, state, local, and non-profit partner organizations listed below to find MPA related resources.

Click on a logo to get more info on these organizations



Teaching Materials

A collection of various teaching and training guides, and curriculum based materials. These resources may be useful for professional teachers, interpretive staff, naturalists, and docents and volunteers to effectively communicate MPAs and ocean conservation messaging.

Marine Protected Area (MPA) Docent Training Handbooks

By Ocean Communicators Alliance
Docents and naturalists play a critical role in helping to increase stewardship and educate the public on the importance of California's coast and ocean, including marine protected areas. The Ocean Communicators Alliance has recently developed MPA Docent Training Handbooks for each coastal region of California. These handbooks are geared towards docents and naturalists, and staff who run docent and naturalist programs, and then make each of these bulletins underneath. There is one for every region of CA, the central coast is the one currently online.

- North Coast Ocean MPA Training Handbooks (2.4M PDF file)
- North Central Coast Ocean MPA Training Handbooks (2.6M PDF file)
- Central Coast Ocean MPA Training Handbooks (1.8M PDF file)
- South Coast Ocean MPA Training Handbooks (2M PDF file)

MPA Jeopardy (249K PDF file)

This interactive learning tool was developed by the PORTS program of California State Parks and teaches students about marine protected areas through a Jeopardy style question and answer game. Requires PowerPoint. (249K zipped pdf file)

One fish, two fish, red fish... no more fish! Importance of Marine Protected Areas (195K PDF file)

The COSIA (Communicating Ocean Sciences to Informal Audiences) program at CalPoly San Luis Obispo has created several curricula designed to convey ocean science concepts in informal learning settings such as aquariums, interpretive centers, and public outreach events. One of these curricula focuses on California's network of MPAs and how MPAs can ameliorate problems such as overfishing. This lesson plan guides teachers and facilitators through a series of interactive activities, and includes resources on the science of MPAs.

Our Undersea Legacy: A Curriculum Resource for Marine Protected Areas in Southern California (11.7M PDF file)

The Southern California Aquarium Collaborative, along with California Sea Grant and COSEE West, has generated a series of lesson plans for middle school students. The curriculum includes background information, detailed lesson plans and activities, and extension resources and addresses many of the California state standards.

Videos From Our Partners

Managing California's Network of Marine Protected Areas - Podcast by Thank You Ocean



This Thank You Ocean Report features Becky Oak, Habitat Conservation Program Manager of California's Department of Fish and Wildlife (Marine Region), who discusses how adaptive, long-term management through education and outreach, monitoring, and enforcement will be critical to meet the goals of the Marine Life Protection Act.
Photo credit: NOAA

Enforcement of Marine Protected Areas - Podcast from Thank You Ocean



One of the critical aspects of managing MPAs is enforcement. On this podcast, we talk with California Department of Fish and Wildlife Assistant Chief Taryn Harrington about some of the issues surrounding enforcement of MPAs.
Photo credit: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

South Coast Marine Protected Areas: Humans and Nature Together



California's South Coast is impressively urbanized and population is growing. Will our activities crowd out marine life or can both nature and human activities be accommodated and thrive?

Harbor Outreach

Article published in the Dept. of Boating and Waterways Changing Tide publication.

Marine Protected Areas Boating Flyer

California is leading the nation in marine protection with the recent completion of the first statewide network of marine protected areas.

Marine protected areas, often called underwater parks, protect our "Jewel of the Sea".

California's MPAs add to the lasting legacy of healthy coasts for future generations to enjoy.

California's coastal ocean supports a multi-billion dollar economy. Safeguarding this natural capital through marine protection is a wise investment in the state's future.

There are many ways to enjoy California's marine protected areas. You can swim, dive, surf, kayak, watch birds and marine mammals, and much more. Or, simply relax in nature.

California's Marine Protected Areas

There are over 124 state marine protected areas preserving 16% of California's coastal waters.

For more information on California's marine protected areas, including maps, regulations, virtual tours and much more please visit CaliforniaMPAs.org.

THE CHANGING TIDE

Spring 2019

Celebrating California's Underwater Parks

The network of over 124 MPAs (approximately 16% of California's coastal waters).

Contributing Author: California Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Now that the first statewide network of marine protected areas (MPAs) is complete, California leads the nation in ocean protection. Often called underwater parks, MPAs conserve special places like Big Sur's submarine canyons and rocky promontories that are home to sea otters, rare cold water corals, and large rockfish. The network of 124 MPAs protects 16% of California's waters, provides a network of refuges for ocean residents to recover and thrive, and gives residents and tourists places to fish, dive, surf and enjoy the benefits of a healthy coastal community.

Boating Discretionary:
California's MPAs protect a range of coastal habitats such as kelp forests, rocky reefs, and coastal wetlands and many of them are fantastic boating destinations! There are many ways to enjoy these special places: you can swim, dive, surf, kayak, fish, watch birds and marine mammals, or simply relax in nature. A boat makes accessing and enjoying these special places easier. Just make sure you know the rules before you go!

For brochures and fishing guides with maps and regulations, please visit: www.californiamaps.org/boating
www.boating.ca.gov/boating/2019

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THE CHANGING TIDE

Celebrating California's Underwater Parks

Easily Accessible Marine Protected Areas

www.californiamaps.org

<p>Point Reyes State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)</p> <p>Access from the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta area harbors and Solsaga Harbor</p> <p>This MPA lies slightly offshore from Point Reyes, a spectacular and biologically diverse peninsula in Marin County, from your vessel, watch for unique birds and migrating marine mammals or enjoy certain kinds of fishing under specific rules and regulations: www.californiamaps.org/boating/regulations/pointreyes.html</p>	<p>Morro Bay State Marine Recreation Management Area (SMRMA)</p> <p>Access from Morro Bay Harbor</p> <p>This MPA encompasses a large portion of the Morro Bay National Estuary, one of the largest wetland systems on the central coast. A variety of activities can be enjoyed from your vessel including bird and marine mammal watching and even certain kinds of fishing: www.californiamaps.org/boating/regulations/morrobay.html</p>	<p>Cape Mendocino State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)</p> <p>Access from Newport Harbor and Gales Point Harbor</p> <p>This MPA lies just outside of Newport Harbor, and protects 3.45 square miles of rocky pinnacles and sandy beaches, shallow reefs and kelp forests. It features outstanding opportunities for scuba diving and wildlife viewing. You can even enjoy certain kinds of fishing: www.californiamaps.org/boating/regulations/capemendocino.html</p>
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For more information on California's MPAs please visit CaliforniaMPAs.org.

Three panel exhibit used at boater outreach events and integration into existing harbor kiosks.

